

Appln No. 09/963,872
Amdt date December 20, 2004
Reply to Office action of September 20, 2004

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

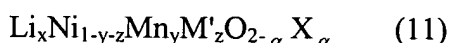
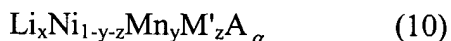
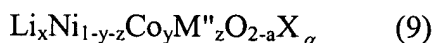
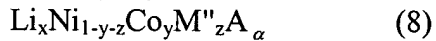
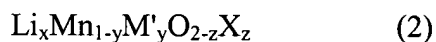
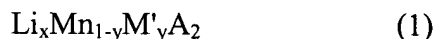
1. (currently amended) A method of preparing a positive active material for a rechargeable lithium battery comprising:

a) introducing into a mixer a lithiated compound and ~~either an organic a solution including an alkoxide of~~ a coating-element source ~~or an aqueous solution including a coating-element source~~ wherein the ~~coating-element~~ coating-element source comprises at least one coating element selected from the group consisting of B, Al, Ga, Si, Ge, Sn and As;

b) coating the lithiated compound with the ~~organic solution or the aqueous solution~~, while increasing the ambient temperature and mixing; and

c) heat-treating the coated lithiated compound at a temperature between about 100°C to about 1000°C to form a surface-treatment layer on the surface of the lithiated compound.

2. (currently amended) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 1 wherein the lithiated compound is one or more lithiated compounds selected from the group consisting of compounds represented by the formulas 1 to 11:



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Wherein:

$$\begin{array}{l} 0.95 \leq x \leq 1.1, 0 \leq y \leq 0.5, 0 \leq z \leq 0.5, \\ 0 \leq \alpha \leq 2, \\ 0.95 \leq x \leq 1.1, 0 \leq y \leq 0.5, 0 \leq z \leq 0.5, 0 \leq \alpha \leq 2, \\ \text{M is Ni or Co,} \end{array}$$

M' is one or more elements selected from a group consisting of AL, Ni, Co, Cr, Fe, Mg, Sr, V, Sc, Y, La, Ce, Pr, Nd, Pm, Sm, Eu, Gd, Tb, Dy, Ho, Er, Tm, Yb, Lu, Ac, Th and Pa,

M'' is one or more elements selected from a group consisting of Al, Cr, Mn, Fe, Mg, Sr, V, Sc, Y, La, Ce, Pr, Nd, Pm, Sm, Eu, Gd, Tb, Dy, Ho, Er, Tm, Yb, Lu, Ac, Th and Pa,

A is selected from the group consisting of O, F, S and P, and

X is selected from the group consisting of F, S. and P.

3. (original) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 1 wherein the coating step further comprises introducing a flushing gas into the mixer.

4. (original) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 1 wherein the coating step is performed under vacuum.

5. (original) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 1 wherein the temperature of the mixer is kept in the range of 50°C to 100°C.

6. (currently amended) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 1 wherein the concentration of the coating element source in the ~~organic or aqueous~~ solution ranges from 0.1 to 50 wt%.

7. (currently amended) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 6 wherein the concentration of the coating element source in the ~~organic solution or the aqueous solution~~ ranges from 1 to 20 wt%.

8. (canceled)

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9. (previously presented) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 1 wherein the coating element is Al or B.

10. (canceled)

11. (original) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 1 wherein the heat-treating process is performed under flowing air for 1 to 20 hours.

12. (currently amended) A method of preparing a positive active material for a rechargeable lithium battery comprising:

a) introducing a lithiated compound and ~~either an organic~~ a solution including an alkoxide of a coating-element source ~~or an aqueous solution including a coating element source to a mixer~~, the lithiated compound being selected from the group consisting of lithium-cobalt chalcogenide, lithium-manganese chalcogenide, lithium-nickel chalcogenide and lithium-nickel-manganese chalcogenide wherein the ~~coating element~~ coating-element source comprises at least one coating element selected from the group consisting of B, Al, Ga, Si, Ge, Sn and As;

b) coating the compound with the ~~organic solution or aqueous~~ solution, while increasing the temperature of the mixer and mixing; and

c) heat-treating the coated compound at a temperature between about 100°C and about 1000°C to form a surface-treatment layer on the surface of the compound.

13. (original) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 12 wherein the coating step further comprises introducing a flushing gas into the mixer.

14. (original) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 12 wherein the coating step is performed under vacuum.

15. (original) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 12 wherein the temperature of the mixer is kept in the range of 50°C to 100°C.

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16. (currently amended) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 12 wherein the concentration of the coating element source in the ~~organic solution or the aqueous~~ solution ranges from 0.1 to 50 wt%.

17. (currently amended) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 16 wherein the concentration of the coating element source in the ~~organic solution or the aqueous~~ solution ranges from 1 to 20wt%.

18. (canceled)

19. (previously presented) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 12, wherein the coating element is Al or B.

20. (canceled)

21. (original) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 12 wherein the heat-treating process is performed under flowing air for 1 to 20 hours.

22. (currently amended) The method of preparing a positive active material for a rechargeable lithium battery comprising:

a) introducing a lithiated compound and ~~either an organic~~ a solution including an alkoxide of an Al source or a B source ~~or an aqueous solution including an Al source or a B source to a mixer~~, the lithiated compound being selected from the group consisting of lithium-cobalt chalcogenide, lithium-manganese chalcogenide, lithium-nickel chalcogenide and lithium-nickel-manganese chalcogenide;

b) coating the compound with the ~~organic solution or aqueous~~ solution, while increasing the temperature of the mixer and mixing; and

c) heat-treating the coated compound at a temperature between about 100°C and about 1000°C to form an Al₂O₃ or B-included oxide surface-treatment layer on the surface of the compound.

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23. (original) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 22 wherein the coating step further comprises introducing a flushing gas into the mixer.

24. (original) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 22 wherein the coating step is performed under vacuum.

25. (original) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 22 wherein the temperature of the mixer is kept in the range of 50°C to 100°C.

26. (currently amended) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 22 wherein the concentration of Al or B in the ~~organic solution or the aqueous solution~~ ranges from 0.1 to 50 wt%.

27. (currently amended) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 26 wherein the concentration of the coating element in the ~~organic solution or the aqueous solution~~ ranges from 1 to 20 wt%.

28. (canceled)

29. (original) The method of preparing a positive active material of claim 22 wherein the heat-treating process is performed under flowing air for 1 to 20 hours.